

REMARKS

AMENDMENTS

Claim 10 is amended herein to introduce the limitation that silicone rubber comprises at least 75% of the entire polymeric binder. The amendment was not earlier presented as it is submitted as a consequence of the examiner's analysis and position as set forth in the Final Office Action (see 37 CFR §1.116(c)). Additionally, as the proposed amendment is based on the examiner's previously presented analysis and position, it raises no new issues requiring further consideration or search by the examiner, and raises no issues of new matter under 35 USC §132(a).

In the examiner's analysis, the limiting phrase "consisting essentially of" is interpreted to mean "comprising," and accordingly, applicants have returned this portion of the claim to its original reading.

It is respectfully requested that the amendments to claim 10 be introduced.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC §103(A)

The examiner rejects claims 10, 13, 15, and 18-20 under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over the disclosure of Notsu et al. (EP 0 666 184 A1). In making this rejection, the examiner states that "if all of the polymeric binder were at least 75% silicone rubber in said layer ... this would be unobvious over Notsu et al." (Final Office Action, p.4). The above-indicated amendments to claim 10 effect this change, and limit the invention to those processes in which the amount of silicone rubber is at least 75% by weight, relative to the total amount of binder used. Applicants respectfully submit that this

HILLER et al., Serial No. 10/090,229

amendment is sufficient to bring the present claims into compliance with the examiner's view on nonobviousness with regard to the Notsu et al. reference. Applicants further respectfully request that the rejection under §103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of these amendments and remarks, applicants consider that the rejections of record have been obviated and respectfully solicit passage of the application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,
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